

Ambrise

June 7

My Billy.

It is raining & there is nothing to do in this small place so perhaps I may write to you though of course I have nothing to write about but our travels & I'm sure travelers' tales are the last thing you want from me. You may be surprised to hear that we've got so far safely after our rather ineffectual start, my snip off without realizing that Angus wasn't on board & then Duncan's finding out that he had carefully left his passport & all his money behind - Then we got held up at Arles by my getting drawn into an antiquity shop where I bought a chest of drawers for La Bersiere. However after that we got on quite well & have now been more than 600 miles. Our most exciting adventure was with a cart horse driving along a flat wide road in the huge open space of the Camargues. The road was very bad & the large unimproved lakes full of water. I saw a horse & cart some way ahead seeming quite quiet & with plenty of space before but just as we got near them the car splashed a huge fountain of water up into our faces & as we emerged from it I saw men shouting. The horse rearing & plunging across the road. The cart coming straight into us - Luckily the road was so wide & level I could just swerve & dash by before the cart went finally into the ditch. However no harm seemed to have been done. They unharnessed the horse & we went on like the worse. Otherwise there have been no special excitement.

We have been through some very odd & some very beautiful country & some that seems as if it would give me all we could possibly want - I see that Nan is very clever, like most Americans, at finding good places & hotels. Both the places she had told us of were lovely & at the one we stayed at, Brayline the room was perfect, food delicious, hot water, electric light, people charming & very cheap. One could live there in the greatest comfort & luxury with home made pate & truffles in about 35/- a week for everything - including hot baths. If you give up Rodwell why should we all spend a summer there? I believe it would be very nice.

Which reminds me of your letter & all its business first about La Bergère. As soon as I had asked you to advertise I got a letter from Mr. Probert who had heard of it from Vera Bowen. He is a kind man Duncan thinks, but that doesn't matter. I have let him live for 6 weeks in Aug & Sept. Then Bunnings wife wrote & wanted it in June for a month anyhow - so it's let for nearly 3 months. I hope you haven't taken much trouble. But it may help to let it another time if you had already advertised -

As for Rodwell, it's rather dreadful just now. I see you can't stay if they really build next door. But I don't know what to do ourselves, as I don't think we're in much danger of building at Charleston unless L.D. says so desperately hard up. Therefore it seems unnecessary to move at any rate till we're turned out which can't be for another 4 years.

It's such a perfect place for us / with the me & great
 drawback of the Hayes / that I don't think we
 could find anything else as good easily. But if you go
 to Dorset I shall never see you. & it's a long way for
 week ends - I prefer the east countries - only the
 climate may be very cold. It's all very different.
 I hope you do nothing in a hurry. I feel that
 all our habitations are in a state of flux & I think
 we had better have a grand family council on the
 subject when Old Blowingbury meets me more.
 Anyhow I am glad H.P.S. is sold. I'm sure that's
 a good thing. I wonder what has been done about
 the mortgage.

It is now pouring with rain & I fear we have
 driven back into the usual northern summer.
 The climate changed completely after Périgord - The
 French took on another race here, far more efficient &
 critical. Duncan & I have both become very disreputable
 by now, as black as niggers & dusty to a degree -
 He has no ties, no buttons & his shirts & usually
 no socks. I have lost my only decent pair of shoes
 & wear red espadrilles & my hat flew off today
 & was picked up by a dog who bit Duncan when
 he tried to take it from him (Frank told us he
 got it himself) Angus alone keeps up to the mark.
 The hotels here will hardly take us in unless we
 drive up to the door in the car which I insist on
 having cleaned occasionally to save my faces. I
 can't think how we shall dare to arrive in Paris.
 But I am becoming homeless since I have
 realized that we have only to change our conception
 of myself into some sort of charwoman or tramp

& walk the streets comfortably in rags or barefoot. Why one should ever think decency let alone smartness necessary I don't know. as we has no wish to hobnob with the other decent & smart. So you must be prepared for a shabby couple. But by that time of course I shall have been able to re-cloth myself in Paris.

I wonder very much what's happening to Angelica - also what you did finally about the photographs? I hope you see her sometime. It's a blessing that you are really quite as foolish about my children as I am. In fact I don't see how any one in their senses could resist Angelica who is evidently the most exquisite & gifted creature of the next generation. I hope I shall get news of her in Paris.

We shall have a great deal of gossip & exchange - at least you will have a great deal to tell me. Angus has given us practically none. He seems quite contented in a mild way - I don't think he's worrying much about having no job - We sometimes suggest new professions, but I see that really the only possible thing for him is a mild office routine, nothing involving risk or enterprise. That will probably turn up one day.

We shall be in Paris on Saturday / expect to stay there a few days. Then I live to Dapigny & then Newhaen & London. Shall I be able to house the car in your garage? Could you let us know about that? A line to the Hotel de Londres would reach me -
Yours VJB

Charleston

15 August.

1928?

Wed.

My Riley

We propose to come to lunch tomorrow
I hope you won't be horrified - that's the
night I'm staying I know - & stay till
the 5 o'clock bus leaves Rodwell.

I hope to hear all about your week
end which seems to have been
considered brilliant by the hosts.

Should you feel inclined to come
to a birthday tea on Sunday? No.

I suppose you'll have Murray with
you & won't want to come

or far.

Yours VJ

from Munich?

1929

37, GORDON SQUARE,

W.C.1.

MUSEUM 5596.

Feb 4

My Billy

I was horrified to hear of the results of my dragging
 you. I thought indeed I suppose most of the knolls
 must be put down to the racket, like you were
 leading in Berlin. I was afraid of it at the
 time, but it seemed impossible to do anything
 else. I hope I believe it will be unnecessary
 for any of us ever to visit Germany again.
 I can't think how you, who had after all, been
 there many times before, ever came to do such
 a thing. The hideousness of the people &
 the tastelessness of everything including food
 really makes life unbearable to anyone with
 senses. Unless like Quentin they are caught
 in early youth & overcome by romance.
 Dresden however was far better than Berlin
 & Vienna quite different. Roger went & said
 it but it really has a charm & society & life
 of its own. The Austrians are absolutely unlike
 the Germans. I can't think why they speak
 the same language. Our last 3 days there
 were spent entirely in the company of (live
 & Dick Wynham. He is a curious character
 a sort of madcap with enormous energy, ready
 to plunge into anything he can find. He loved
 the cold which seemed to me too painful to
 come & was impelled to go up into the mountains

His liaison with Clive is curious. He has an affair with Edith Fanning, Clive an affair with her sister Joan, who is the young woman at Carris to whom he gave his pyjamas. Edith & Joan's mother died when they were quite children. Their father is a black sheep & lives at some place like Guadeloupe. They were properly brought up by a guardian & meant for Newnham. Then Edith got to know Freddie Mayor & became secretary to him at the time he had an art-dealer's business of his own. Dick Wyndham started an affair with her. She fell desperately in love with him & has been so ever since. Now Clive has started his liaison with Joan & I imagine that Dick W. who is not in love with Edith & Clive who I should think would inevitably get bored if he saw too much of Joan alone, both find it convenient to have this curious arrangement of all 4 together. The two sisters were due to arrive at Vienna very soon & they were coming on together vaguely somewhere. They have no fixed plans, but Edith has an engagement, a very well paid one, on the films. At the end of March they go with their company on a tour round the world & till then Clive will be with them, or with Joan at any rate, either in France or Austria or wherever they take a fancy to be. He told me all this & I asked him whether anything new had happened about Mary. He said they were on the best of terms when they met & that was all. He is now perfectly happy though he supposes it cannot last. So anything?

37, GORDON SQUARE,

W.C.1.

MUSEUM 5596.

he will be out of London for some time. He proposes
 to come back for about a fortnight at the end
 of March. Then to come for a short visit to
 Cassis. Then to go on to Sicily with Raymond.
 I think it is probably a good arrangement &
 my hope by the time he comes back all the
 past will have been forgotten - The only drawback
 is that I can't believe Joan, who seemed
 completely empty headed, can conduce to
 a very sensible existence meanwhile.
 However I must say he seemed very cheerful
 without any depressed moods.

We came here yesterday & I think we
 shall have seen all that is necessary by
 Friday when we mean to go to Paris,
 returning to London on Sunday. I shall be
 delighted to get back. But still I am very
 glad I came as there is no doubt we had
 to see the pictures here & elsewhere but especially
 here where the gallery seems even finer than
 in Berlin or Vienna. However I want please
 you with art criticism. Also I have
 satisfied my curiosity about the Germans -
 I see they are a very simple, kind nice
 people on the whole & I suppose one might

be very happy with them if one could become
unaware of their appearance. Duncan & I went
last night to a cafe where they danced & were
impressed by their complete unself-consciousness
& the way in which all, including the waiters,
enjoyed themselves. They are extraordinarily
friendly to us & amused by our inability to
talk German. Quentin wasn't with us as he
had a cold & went to bed. We are very

well off here in a hotel slightly more expensive
than the Berlin one, but we have a bathroom
& W.C. of our own between the 3 of us.
It is perishing cold - far more so than it was
at Berlin & one breaks poking one's nose out of
doors. In fact it makes it rather difficult
to do anything but work at pictures as there is
no pleasure in wandering the streets in this
temperature.

I heard absolutely nothing
from Louis Grace or Angeline while I was at Vienna
nor have I heard yet. I suppose they are all
right. I do hope you are being sensible & are
recovering & will be pleased to see me back.
We might possibly come on Saturday. I don't
know yet. But I will let Grace know so she
can be rung up if you want to find out
please be good & do what you've told or you will have
me on you. Yours V.B.

1929

La Bèze
Cassis

9 March

My Billy.

It seems a very long time since I saw you just a week ago. We actually got off & reached Paris safely & found Quentin at the Louvre. That night Helen turned up from Etampes. She had left Roger there & intended to go to London herself. The next day I said that Roger was leaving at 8 in the morning for Cassis. As I knew he would not be able to get a room at Fortenay & was said to be crippled with sciatica it seemed best to prevent him. So we telephoned to Etampes & got him to come instead to Paris. Helen stayed another day & so we had them both at first & then Roger for the rest of the time. He became more & more vigorous, discovered a completely new drug for sciatica which worked wonders, found that, owing to a new radiator which he had had made of some recently discovered mixture of metals, he could eat faster & more than any one else. Completely forgot all about his inside - in fact he led a life which would have killed most young men & threw on it. We left him proposing to paint in the Louvre & make expeditions to Versailles, etc. Then he is going to see a new doctor who may order him to go to baths for sciatica. Then he returns to London to entertain the Maurons - then he may do his cure or may come here. Anyhow you will see him. We met Grace & the children on Sunday evening & came on here arriving yesterday for lunch. It's a very easy journey as we did it & you must do the same. You leave after

167
my bag, shall be waiting to look up your letters. So please send some - I swear I shall say if asked that they are going to a degree - Has the looking glass come -
my Billy

1929

La Bégère
Cassis

9 March

My Billy.

It seems a very long time since I saw you just a week ago. We actually got it & reached Paris safely & found Quentin at the Louvre. That night Helen turned up from Etampes. She had left Roger there & intended to go to London herself. The next day I said that Roger was leaving at 8 in the morning for Cassis. As I knew he would not be able to get a room at Fortkense & was said to be crippled with sciatica it seemed best to prevent him. So we telephoned to Etampes & got him to come instead to Paris. Helen stayed another day & so we had them both at first & then Roger for the rest of the time. He became more & more vigorous, discovered a completely new drug for sciatica which worked wonders, found that, owing to a new racket which he had had made of some recently discovered mixture of metals, he could eat faster & more than anyone else, completely forgot all about his inside - in fact he led a life which would have killed most young men & threw on it. We left him proposing to paint in the Louvre & make expeditions to Versailles, etc. Then he is going to see a new doctor who may order him to go to baths for sciatica. Then he returns to London to entertain the Maurons - then he may do his cure or may come here. Anyhow you will see him. We met Grace & the children on Sunday evening & came on here arriving yesterday for lunch. It's a very easy journey as we did it & you must do the same. You leave after

167
I shall say if asked
They are going to a
depress - the looking
glass one -
my 13
letters. So please send some - I swear
only waiting to look up your
bag shall be head to us the but-Duncan & then
they have lost your powers as a letter writer & that
my bag shall be head to us the but-Duncan & then
they have lost your powers as a letter writer & that

lunch me day from Victoria, take a second class wagon lit
arrive here for lunch the next day. Its very comfortable
& quite hardly aware of anything. as you wake up
at 8 at Avignon & find a delicious French breakfast
awaiting you in the train. & soon after you get to
Marseille where you will find me in my smart new
Citroën - I went into Marseille today with Clive
& thought it will come in a day or two & so I hope
with my French driving licence. It is absolutely
necessary to have a car here now as the Colonel's old
Ford has broken down for good it is thought & there
is no way of getting the washing to the town
or anything from it except in Coquet the druggist.

I expect a lovely French girl to arrive before long
by name Sabine de Fondeville. I am rather terrified
at the prospect but in the while it seems the best thing
to do. I saw her in Paris & she seemed nice &
cheerful & will I think teach the children much
more French than they could learn from their daily
work with old Mlle Chevalier. Meanwhile the house
is very full with Julian & Quentin, who sleeps in the
town. Julian has a long hard & goes off to talk
to nature for hours every day. I think he is full of
every sort of private feeling & theory. He seems to have
been very happy here alone. Quentin paints & carries
on with anyone he can find. Clive seems cheerful &
quiet - We all lead the usual sort of Charleston
existence or shall do so as soon as we have settled
down. So far I have hardly had time to unpack
so you see how devoted it is of me to write to you
I have a case with a lock & key, the case in a cupboard
where no one would expect to find it, the key in a purse in

La Bergère. Wednesday

17 April
1929

My Betty.

You will have seen Julian probably before you get this & heard all the news from him. I will begin by being very business like. I am very sorry about the Times book - but no stress will be sent to you. Please thank Leonard for sending me that one. Talking of which, Jean is most anxious to know whether you are coming here this year, because she is so much touched by your constant thought of her that she says there is nothing she would not do for you - she will give you the Tower room to work in & luncheon in it when you like. I said I thought you might come about the end of May. which I hope is true. As far as I can see Clive will have gone before then & no one else will be here, unless it's Roger. But I don't know what he means to do. He wrote to me rather disturbed, having seen a completely new doctor for his sciatica in Paris, who said it wasn't sciatica but arterio-sclerosis, which may be very serious. He is having inoculations for it. if they don't succeed he may have to have a small operation. But I suppose anyhow he'll go back to England before long & you will see him. To return to business, I write a most business like letter to Vita. I now hear from her that the chief drawback to their taking the house may be the premium. I feel perhaps I ought to ask it, but I suppose I could get me in the open market. Anyhow could you tell her the following things she wants to know - (I give up the house at Michaelmas. She can certainly wait to give me an answer until she has had time to talk to Harold. They are in a hurry. As for the tenants, I think Douglas & Dottie want to leave. if they can find something else. They pay me £150 a year & I expect she could let the top floor for £200 as I believe Lytton pays them £150 for one floor only. So she might

as well to let them so. I think Bunnay would be glad to stay. He has the front basement room & bathroom for which he pays 15/- a week. I think very likely I shall take the two back rooms - that is if Grace could live there & come & Fitzroy St every day. Nothing is settled about her. I think Elie is very doubtful really about wanting her & I haven't said a word to her yet.

As for other business, here are the bills for things I have paid for.

Poltery	10. 0.
Table	4. 10. 0.
Whitening "	1. 6. 0.
" chain	1. 4. 0.
Stuff for cushions	1- 19- 7

£9. 9. 7

4. 17. 10

4. 11. 9

Bill for cushions not yet sent in.
nor bill for mirror.

I owe you £47. 10. from a cheque from Luperians which I ought to have paid before so I deduct that -

Now I want you to be extremely reasonable & kind & let me speak without holding up your hands & shivering. I wish you'd let me give you my share of the work. Is this too much to ask? If I make you furious by doing so I will yield & send you in a bill just as I would to anyone else. At the same time I don't see why I shouldn't make this sensible request. One gets all the benefits of the Light House or Orlando for a few shillings - or even free - so why shouldn't you get some benefits such as they are out of me? Leonard may perhaps see the force of this argument & possibly may make you see it too. I hope for the best.

(168ⁱⁱ) One other piece of business. If you want some lavender, there
you might get Mrs. Mansfield to let you in to the basement at 37.
There in Julian's back room, on the tall chest, I think you
will find some pots of paint (I hope they are not dried up)
white, blue & red. Blue & white & a tiny touch of red will
make lavender blue - It can't be bought! I have tried.

Life here has been so pandemonium with the whole
family that I have had to give up my letter to you in
despair. Julian has now gone but Sabine has come -
Duncan & I had to meet her last night at Mansfield
at 10 o'clock. I don't know what will happen or how
she'll fit in. She seems quite nice, sensible. I think
at any rate the children can't help being a little

French from her as she doesn't understand a word of
English & will spend hours a day with them. We shall
have to have her for meals, but I hope to make her spend
her evenings with Grace. She has the effect on him of
course of making him say all sorts of things that I think
I tremble as to what will come next - her youth - she
is Joan's age - has already been married up. However
he is very useful in keeping up a chatter.

Do tell me what Raymond says. Your letters are really
put away with the greatest care. (We saw the last
one come & clamoured for news. But I read it all
to myself & then saw selected excerpts before putting
it into its niche. So you really need have no fear -
He didn't even know I had the first one & as a rule
isn't here when the postman comes. Julian had a letter
just come when your letter came. So you set us going like
Roger would bring some if you asked him. He
sounded very happy walking about in search of
what more do you want.

of us far more than seeing us because then you
can make us all do what is really characteristic
of us instead of so often failing - I wonder if Angus
will really take Hugh Walpole's job. Of course he ought
to. I think I should have thought he would be free from
scandal altogether. You seem to be seeing a lot of Hugh W.
Yesterday I thought I'd better try to read me of his
works so I bought me called The Man with Red Hair
for 2½ in Marseilles. It let you know what I think
of it. It is now thundering & raining & pitch dark.
not snowing but quite cold. However this morning was
brilliant sunshine & the children did their lessons out of doors.
I hope promptly our Citroën may arrive today.

I have seen no one at all in Cassis except the reeds
He is said to be rather low & depressed. So Kate tells
Clive - Now that the Ford has quite collapsed I think
life is rather harder. & the awful cold in the
winter has killed many things, no one knows yet
how much. But the olives are a rusty brown & are
losing all their leaves. I am sure it would be awful
to live all the year in Cassis, rather poor & without a
car, seeing a great deal of people like the Crothers -
Dermot O'Brien has been here again - but you will
be sorry to hear it was before we came so I cannot give
you first hand news of him. He has a grown up daughter
who paints & comes too. He is said to be very pompous.

Do see the Meyers. & Mary. & Sybil. & anyone else
for my sake. Maynard has more or less climbed down
over our Artists' Ass. difficulties. I wonder whether he will
about Wittgenstein. Julian was very quiet & silent here perhaps
somewhat disturbed by the family in his solitary peace -
Yours 1/17

T. PARSONS 13.2.73